

NO ONE CALLS ME ANY MORE

I'm not sure who
(although I have a pretty good idea)
but someone ran up a \$200
phone bill last month
calling back east to Troy Michigan
and charged it to my home phone.

So I called up General Telephone
and had the number changed
and I said while you're at it
how about making it unlisted.

The service rep said it would cost
me an extra
15¢ a month for an unlisted number.
Fine, I said, I
think I can afford that.

Now the phone never rings.
It's heaven.
No insurance salesmen
asking how I'm doing this evening.
No morticians
trying to peddle me matching plots.
It's bliss.

Amazing what 15¢ a month can buy.

(Although I think I'll miss
the firemen calling me up once a year
offering tickets
to the Firemen's Annual Ball.)

A BAT OUT OF HELL

Remember the time
you drove all the way
from Chino to San Pedro
in the rain
barreling along
like a bat out of hell
in the old Chevy
and I could hardly
keep up with you
even though I was
driving Wendy's Mustang.

I never dreamed
you had such
a lead foot
nor that you were
so fearless, it
scared me to death

the way we took corners,
ran red lights,
never slowing for a second,
60 miles per hour
all the way.

And when we got there
and I asked you about it,
you didn't even know
you had been going
so very fast.

How odd it was,
you ahead of me
leading the wild way
so vulnerable
so fearless
like a mad woman
like a bat out of hell
and the children,
your sleeping babies,
so precarious
in the back seat.

POOL PARTY

I knew I couldn't get out of going
to the party, so I made up my mind that
at least I wasn't getting in the pool.

Barry offered to loan me some trunks
of his. They were huge, baggy things
with bright Hawaiian flowers on them.

It really seemed to bother him that
I didn't want to swim in his pool.

He must have asked me a dozen times
if I was sure I didn't want the trunks.

"Naw," I said, "I'm fine." I laid back
in the deck chair and worked on my
farmer tan.

The girls from the office took off
their clothes (except for swimsuits,
of course) and gradually got used to
being nearly naked in front of each other.

The sun was straight up and hot. I sat
there sweating in my blue shirt and
brown cords, looking like a wino,
sipped at a beer and watched the girls
through slit eyes.

Everybody kept trying to get me into
the goddamn pool. They were obsessed